Walls of Protection

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HARIJAN

Editor: PYARELAL

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MEDICINE FOR THE MASSES

Gandhiji's partiality for Nature Cure is well-known. His experience of allopathic doctors in early life does not appear to have been very happy. One doctor told him in South Africa that his wife who was suffering from some gynaecological trouble could not be cured unless she was given beef tea. She was very ill, but both he and she being strict vegetarians refused to use animal food even at the risk of death. The doctor gave up the case and she recovered with simple rest and Nature Cure treatment. One or two other similar experiences confirmed his faith in Nature Cure beyond any doubt and it has persisted ever since.

He is of the masses and for the masses. Therefore, Nature Cure as it is practised by well-known Nature Cure experts in this country does not attract him. To a foreign Nature Cure expert he wrote a few days ago:

"You will be pleased to know that I became a confirmed convert to Nature Cure when I read Kuhne's *New Science of Healing* and Just's *Return to Nature* over forty years ago. I must confess that I have not been able fully to follow the meaning of *Return to Nature* not because of want of will but because of my ignorance. I am now trying to evolve a system of Nature Cure suited to the millions of India's poor. I try to confine myself to the propagation of such cure as is derivable from the use of earth, water, light, air and the great void. This naturally leads man to know that the sovereign cure of all ills is the recitation from the heart of the name of God whom some millions here know by the name of *Rama* and the other millions by the name of *Allah*. Such recitation from the heart carries with it the obligation to recognize and follow the laws which Nature has ordained for man. This train of reasoning leads one to the conclusion that prevention is better than cure. Therefore, one is irresistibly driven to inculcating the laws of hygiene, i. e., of cleanliness of the mind, of the body and of its surroundings."

Recently during Shri Manu Gandhi's illness, he consulted several naturopaths, some of whom firmly held that she was not suffering from appendicitis. Therefore, he would gladly have avoided any operation but when the doctors came to the conclusion that the operation was inevitable he yielded. Colonel Bhargava of Patna performed the operation and removed the appendix which was found to be chronically inflamed. The day after the operation he spent considerable time in writing strictures to the naturopath friends.

I received the news of Shri Manu Gandhi's operation while I was convalescing after an appendicectemy myself. In a letter Gandhiji wrote: "My pride has had a fall. I have had to have Manu operated upon. I hope and pray that God won't expose me any further. The love of life is hard to overcome."

On my arrival at Delhi he said: "My faith in Nature Cure is increasing. It is the only thing for the masses. But it has its limitations. Those must be recognized."

The key-note of his teaching is humility, hard work and sincere desire to serve the poor. Tall claims of some of the modern Nature Cure experts as of the physicians of any other system annoy him. He appreciates the scientific outlook of the allopaths and the hard work their pioneers have done. But the greed and arrogance of the medical profession as a whole oppresses him. To a naturopath friend he wrote a few days ago: "I admire your enthusiasm. But Naturopathy in India cannot live on blind enthusiasm and certainly not because I have identified myself with it, for, I regard myself as blind. If you translate your enthusiasm into knowledge there may be some hope.

"If you admit your defect, why don't you systematically study anatomy? And have you any intimate knowledge of physiology? The blunder you made would not have been possible if you had benefited by the knowledge which the allopaths have slaved for years to gain. If allopathy rules the world today, it is not because the allopaths have state patronage but because they have sacrificed themselves on the altar of what they consider, wrongly I hold, true science. But modern naturopaths have sacrificed nothing. They are easily satisfied and think that they have a right to flourish at the expense of a credulous public. This is not in praise of allopathy. I have fundamental differences with them. They are guilty of easily satisfying themselves that they have but to receive degrees and use their undigested knowledge for filling their pockets".

Addressing the medical profession in one of his post-prayer speeches he said: "I would like to know what the medical men and scientists are doing for the country. One finds them readily going to foreign lands to learn new modes of treating special diseases. I suggest that they should turn their

attention towards the seven lakhs of the villages of India. They would immediately discover that all the qualified men and women are required for village service not after the manner of the West but after the manner of the East. They will then adapt themselves to many indigenous systems. India does not need imported drugs from the West when she has an inexhaustible stock of a variety of drugs grown in the villages themselves. But more than drugs they have to teach the people the right mode of living."

New Delhi, 5-6-47

S. N.

THE CHALLENGE CUP

Speaking at San Francisco, Mr. Henry Wallace threw out three suggestions for "the abolition of war". His first suggestion is that there should be a military settlement, providing for the world control of atomic energy, internationalization of strategic areas, disarmament in weapons for man's destruction and development of a world security system. His second suggestion is for a political settlement, liquidating Fascism, terminating civil wars in Greece and China and for the attainment of the aspirations of unfree peoples. His last is a ten-year economic programme of reconstruction, administered by the United Nations Agency. But with all these hopeful schemes he says in desperation that he finds "the will lacking". He adds: "We can and must find the will. The devastated and hungry world is crying out, not for guns and tanks to spread hunger but for ploughs and machines to fulfil the promise of peace."

Surely, the former United States Vice-President is aware that however good his suggestions may be as a remedy for the world's ills, they will be futile as long as the root cause of the world's ailment is allowed to remain. Before prescribing the remedy it is necessary to diagnose the disease.

At this hour of the day most people will not need to be told that the cause of this hunger and devastation is not the atom bomb, nor any weapons of man and that no security agreement can form a bulwark against the repetition of the holocaust this generation has suffered. The trouble is deep-seated and needs drastic surgical measures.

As long as the present system of economic organization, whereby it becomes imperative to control sources of fuel, raw materials and supply of labour and ensure adequate markets for finished goods, persists it would follow as night the day that control over other people's lives will be an essential feature of the world order. This system will inevitably call for violence and that of an increasing and novel type. This will guarantee the race to the swiftest in devising ways and means of terrorizing fellow-beings.

An American news agency sends a message that the United States military authorities are testing the possibilities of a deadlier atomic weapon than the atom bomb. This hellish device is the radio-active cloud which is promised to be so Satanc as to win the challenge cup for the most violent. This race will go on unless the nations are willing to adopt economic methods which will not entail violence as a means of working it.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

PROFESSOR DHARMANAND KAUSAMBI

Professor Kausambi was one of the foremost scholars of India. His speciality was a study of Buddhism and the Pali language. For years he worked in America and England as a research worker in Buddhism and made many original contributions in that line.

Last year in September or October he went on a fast unto death. He felt that his work in this life was over and that, therefore, he should put an end to it. But his friends requested Gandhiji to intervene and Gandhiji was able to persuade him to give up the fast. But his health was shattered. He could not digest anything and suffered from urticaria which kept him awake at night. His own people wanted him to have the best of medical treatment, but he chose to spend his last days at the Sevagram Ashram. He would not have his children visit him even during the last stages.

Shri Kakasaheb Kalelkar was a great friend of Professor Kausambi and came to see him now and then. It was a treat to hear the two scholars talk and discuss things.

At Sevagram Ashram he tried allopathic treatment for a while and then gave a trial to Nature Cure. But the will to live was not there and nothing seemed to help him.

He had a great desire to see Gandhiji before his death. But Gandhiji was held up in Noakhali and Bihar. During Gandhiji's last visit to Delhi he asked me to escort him to Delhi and back. All of us considered it a privilege to be able to do anything for him and I got Gandhiji's permission to take him to Delhi, but at the last moment he changed his mind. "Why inconvenience Bapu in this state of my health?" he argued. "If I am destined to see him I will get better or else he will come here." But neither of the two eventualities took place and he expired on the 4th instant in perfect peace of mind. An Ashramite has given a graphic description of his last moments.

> "At 10-00 a. m. Kakasaheb arrived and talked to him. He listened attentively and answered by making signs. Kakasaheb pleaded with him that he should allow his son and daughter to come to see him. But he said no. After that he had his sponge bath and asked someone to open the door on the eastern side as if he was about to step out. Then he took Shankaranji's hand and lightly pressed it, as if to thank him for the latter's services. And he quietly passed away. There was no sorrow or depression in the atmosphere. It seemed as if one of our esteemed companions was starting on a pilgrimage.

"The cremation took place at 5-30 p. m. Kakasaheb, Vinoba and the inmates of all the institutions were there. Kakasaheb discoursed about Kausambiji's life and work after the cremation. It was a rare privilege to witness such a death. He has set an example as to how to welcome death as a friend. How I wish all of us would be able to cultivate Kausambiji's detachment for life and be able to welcome death with a smile!"

Speaking about Professor Kausambi's death in the prayer meeting on the 5th instant Gandhiji had said:

"I am sorry to give you the news of the death of Professor Kausambi, the distinguished Buddhist divine and scholar. He was one of the finest Pali scholars. As such he had worked in America. Though his scholarship would have commanded a lucrative career, he chose the field of service and gave it to the Gujarat Vidyapith established during the non-cooperation days. He passed his last days at the Sevagram Ashram. Ablest doctors would have gladly attended to the deceased scholar. He could have gone to his native place Goa. He had a son and a daughter both receiving high salaries. But he preferred to live as a monk. He was reluctant even to receive any service from the Ashram members. But when he was assured that the Ashram people would consider it an honour to serve him, he readily consented to end his last days in the quieter atmosphere of the Ashram. He practically fasted during the time at the Ashram. Enforcement of the Buddhist doctrine in his own life had taught him to regard death as the most faithful and unfailing friend and deliverer. He therefore shed the fragrance of his life among the privileged inmates of the Ashram. His desire was that there should be no fuss when he died. His only wish was that scholarship or scholarships should be founded to send selected students to Ceylon to learn Pali and become Buddhist preachers."

New Delhi, 8-6-'47 S. N.

Gold-Hunger

A Reuter's message informs us that the British Government has been accumulating gold at a significant pace. At one time England depleted India of her stocks of gold and sent them to American vaults and now she is getting back this gold. One of the great arguments that England has been advancing against the settlement of our sterling credit is that such a settlement will affect their export trade and therefore affect her production of consumer goods. India, being an agricultural country, needs considerable amount of gold reserves for her economic organization to function smoothly. Being largely an illiterate country, banking facilities can form no substitute. Therefore, if England can return her dues to India partially in gold, it will help India and at the same time not affect her programme of production of consumer goods.

J. C. K.

HARIJAN AS THE FIRST PRESIDENT

In one of his post-prayer speeches Gandhiji explained who in his opinion should be the first President of the Indian Republic. In a letter to an Ashramite after Shri Chakrayya's death he wrote: "If all that Lilavati has told me is true, then he certainly did deserve to be the first President of the Indian Republic. I have no doubt in my mind that he who is a devotee of God, who is brave, and who is a servant of the nation can become the first President of free India. A similar idea was expressed by me as president of the G. P. Conference at Godhra years ago. I said then that I won't be happy till the President of the Congress came from the 'lowest class' of the Harijans."

In the speech he narrated how Queen Victoria became the Queen at the age of 17 and the old Premier bowed before this young girl and carried on the Government in her name. "If I have my way I would put a suitable Harijan girl in the presidential chair. In a free India knowledge of English won't be necessary for the President. She need not have knowledge of high politics. All the learned statesmen of the country would help her to carry on the Government."

And who was this Chakrayya whom Gandhiji considered as a fit person to be the first President of India's Republic to be? He was a Harijan from Andhra. He came as a youngster. He became a good tailor, good spinner and weaver and learnt Hindustani. Unlike the average educated Harijan who wants to settle in a city, Chakrayya's ambition was to serve the Harijans in his own village. Suddenly in about 1940 he started getting what looked like epileptic fits. He was a believer in Nature Cure. He went to a Nature Cure sanatorium in Andhra and was reported to have got over the fits. The fits, however, recurred every now and then and they were connected by him with some irregularity in his diet. About a month ago he came back to the Ashram complaining of failing vision and headache. Examination revealed signs of increased intracranial pressure. It was a case of brain tumour. He was sent to a hospital at Bombay where an operation which was considered dangerous was recommended. He sought Gandhiji's advice. A confirmed believer in Nature Cure that Gandhiji is, he saw that Nature Cure could not help a case of brain tumour and advised in favour of the operation. The operation proved fatal. Here is an extract from his letter to Gandhiji written two or three days before the operation, received after his death. "I am not afraid of death. But if you will permit me, I would like to try Nature Cure for a period of four months. If I get better, well and good. If not, I would much rather lay down my life for naturopathy than for allopathy. But I leave the final decision to you."

To an Ashramite he wrote half an hour before going to the operation theatre: "I was very despondent, but now my despondency has gone. One feels happy to go to see the earthly father. How much happier one should feel at the thought of going to see the Father in Heaven? My

fear of death is gone. I am prepared to meet it with joy in my heart." No wonder, Gandhiji considered him a fit person to be the first President of the Indian Republic.

New Delhi. 5-6-'47 S. N.

HARIJAN

June 15 1947

WALLS OF PROTECTION

(*By M. K. Gandhi*)

Let us ask ourselves what walls should be erected to protect *brahmacharya* of which I wrote last week. The answer seems clear. It is not *brahmacharya* that needs walls of protection. To say this is easy enough and sounds sweet. But it is difficult to understand the import of the statement and more so to act accordingly.

It is true that he who has attained perfect *brahmacharya* does not stand in need of protecting walls. But the aspirant undoubtedly needs them, even as a young mango plant has need of a strong fence round it. A child goes from its mother's lap to the cradle and from the cradle to the push-cart — till he becomes a man who has learnt to walk without aid. To cling to the aid when it is needless is surely harmful.

I made it clear last week that *brahmacharya* is one out of the eleven observances. It follows, therefore, that the real aid to *brahmacharya* are the remaining ten observances. The difference between them and the walls of protection is that the latter are temporary, the former permanent. They are an integral part of *brahmacharya*.

Brahmacharya is a mental condition. The outward behaviour of a man is at once the sign and proof of the inner state. He who has killed the sexual urge in him will never be guilty of it in any shape or form. However attractive a woman may be, her attraction will produce no effect on the man without the urge. The same rule applies to woman. But he or she who has not conquered lust should not turn the eyes even towards a sister or a brother or a daughter or a son. This advice I have given to friends who have profited by it.

As for myself I have to admit with great shame that while the sight of women had ceased to rouse any sexual urge in me in South Africa, in the early days of my return to India past recollections roused the urge against which I had to battle fairly hard. The same is true of the vague fear which is so unbecoming in man.

I was cowardly by nature. I was frightened to sleep in the dark. To sleep alone in a room was an act of bravery for me. I hope I have lost that cowardliness. Yet I do not know what would be my state if I lost my way and had to wander alone in a thick forest on a dark night and if I were to forget that God was ever with me. If this childhood's fear has not completely gone from me, it would be certainly more difficult for me to be fearless in a lonely jungle than to control the sex urge.

There are certain rules laid down in India for the would-be *brahmachari*. Thus he may not live among women, animals and eunuchs, he may not teach a woman only or even a group, he may not sit on the same mat as a woman, he may not look at any part of a woman's body, he may not take milk, curds, *ghee* or any fatty substance nor indulge in baths and oily massage. I read about these when I was in South Africa. There I came in touch with some men and women who, while they observed *brahmacharya*, never knew that any of the above-named restraints were necessary. Nor did I observe them and I was none the worse for the non-observance. I did give up milk, *ghee* and other animal substances but for different reasons. I failed in this attempt after two or three years after my return to India. But if today I could find any effective vegetable substitute for milk and *ghee*, I would gladly renounce all animal products. But this is another story.

A perfect *brahmachari* never loses his vital fluid. On the contrary, he is able to increase it day by day and, what is more, he conserves it; he will, therefore, never become old in the accepted sense and his intellect will never be dimmed.

It appears to me that even the true aspirant does not need the above-mentioned restraints. *Brahmacharya* is not a virtue that can be cultivated by outward restraints. He who runs away from a necessary contact with a woman does not understand the full meaning of *brahmacharya*.

Let not the reader imagine for one moment that what I have written is to serve as the slightest encouragement to life without the law of real restraint. Nor is there room in any honest attempt for hypocrisy.

Self-indulgence and hypocrisy are sins to be avoided.

The true *brahmachari* will shun false restraints. He must create his own fences according to his limitations, breaking them down when he feels that they are unnecessary. The first thing is to know what true *brahmacharya* is, then to realize its value and lastly to try to cultivate this priceless virtue. I hold that true service of the country demands this observance.

New Delhi, 8-6-'47

(*From the original in Gujarati*)

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WEEKLY LETTER

Our Duty

With the return of the Viceroy to Delhi, the atmosphere became tense with expectation. The proposals embodied in H. M. G.'s announcement were discussed with the Congress and the League leaders, who in their turn held consultations with their colleagues. But it was decided that nothing should go out until the announcement was formally made on the 3rd June. On the 2nd and the 3rd instant, therefore, Gandhiji requested the audience to check their curiosity. He could not tell them what had happened or what was happening. And he and the audience were men in the street. They should not concern themselves with what the Viceroy had brought. They should concern themselves with what they were to do under given circumstances.

He called upon the doctors to turn their attention to the villages of India and study indigenous drugs and treatments. Above all, he wanted them to teach the people the right way of living.

" What shall I say of the scientists ? " he continued. " Are they giving their attention to growing more food, not again through the aid of artificial manures, but through real scientific treatment of the soil and through a wise use of organic manure. In Noakhali I saw the people even making wise use of the terribly destructive water hyacinth which grows wild and blocks the very necessary water ways. This they will remove when they live for the country rather than for themselves."

He asked the people of India to turn the searchlight inwards. They were perfectly entitled to praise or blame the Congress or the League according to the dictates of their intelligence and conscience. That was the right of the people. They must from then onwards think in terms of *Panchayat Raj*. He had called Pandit Jawaharlal the uncrowned king of India, but the real rulers were the toiling millions.

" Jawaharlalji cannot be replaced today whilst the charge is being taken from Englishmen. He, a Harrow boy, a Cambridge graduate and a barrister, is wanted to carry on negotiations with Englishmen. But a time is fast coming when India will have to elect its first President of the Republic that is coming. I would gladly have presented the late Chakrayya as such had he lived. I would rejoice to think that we had a *mehtar* girl of stout heart, incorruptible and of crystal-like purity to be our first President. It is no vain dream. There are such Harijan girls, if we would but set our hearts on having rustic Presidents. Did I not choose little Gulnar, the daughter of the late Maulana Mahomed Ali as my successor ? The stupid girl married Shwaib Qureshi, once a fakir and introduced to me as the first *satyagrahi* when the Ali Brothers were prisoners. Stupid Gulnar is now a proud mother of bright children but she has forfeited the right to be my successor. Our presidents of the future would not be required to know English. They would have as their counsellors wise patriots knowing the necessary foreign languages and the art of true statesmanship. Such dreams can only be realized if we cease sanguinary fratricide and turn our attention towards our villages."

Referring to the black market he said that a businessman had said to him that it was perhaps only a few traders who indulged in it whereas the real black market was to be seen in the corruption that existed in the Government offices. Gandhiji said that the Government itself was a trading concern. Nevertheless, it made him sad to think that the members of the services were implicated. It made no difference whether they were Europeans or Indians, Hindus or Musalmans. He said that it would be a sad look-out for the future of the country if the services and the people encouraged bribery and corruption. What could Rajaji or Rajen Babu do if they were not honestly helped ? No elected representative of the people could rule by the sword. That was not possible in a democratic State. Gandhiji, therefore, pleaded earnestly with the members of the services, whether British or Indian, to be true to the salt of India and eschew all dishonesty wherever it existed. He appealed also to the public to realize the great responsibility that freedom was throwing on them and to rise to their full stature by clinging to truth and non-violence. Such action would redound not only to their own credit but would be for the good of all and also help the British to withdraw from India, leaving India enjoying an orderly government. He asked them not to believe that the British were dishonest unless they proved themselves unworthy of their trust. He himself believed that the Viceroy was honest. Only by being strictly honest themselves, however, would they be able to steer their ship of State safely to harbour.

Unwilling Partners Not Wanted

On the evening of the 3rd the Viceroy followed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah and Sardar Baldev Singh spoke to the people on the radio. The reactions to H. M. G.'s announcement were mixed. Most of the Hindus were sad. Panditji's broadcast was most touching. They all disliked the vivisection of India. But they could not let India bleed continuously. A surgical operation was to be preferred under the circumstances. Three lorries full of Muslims were reported to have gone to the Qaid-e-Azam's house shouting *Pakistan zindabad.* And yet several Muslims came to see Gandhiji and expressed sorrow over what had happened. In the Punjab and Bengal large numbers of Muslims are reported to be dissatisfied. Speaking on the plan embodied in H. M. G.'s announcement Gandhiji said that he had already told them over and over again that to yield even an inch to force was wholly wrong. The Working Committee holds that they had not yielded to the force of arms but they had to yield to the force of circumstances. The vast majority of Congressmen did not want unwilling partners. Their motto was non-violence and, therefore, no coercion. Hence, after careful weighing of the pros and cons of the vital issues at stake they had reluctantly agreed to the secession from

the Union that was being framed of those parts which had boycotted the Constituent Assembly. Gandhiji expressed sorrow at what he considered was a mistaken policy of the Muslim League. They feared Hindu domination they said, and desired to rule in what they were mistaken in calling their own homelands. As a matter of fact, however, India was the homeland of all who were born and bred in India. Would the Muslim homeland live in isolation? Was not the Punjab as much the homeland of the Hindus, the Sikhs, the Christians, the Jews and the Parsis who were of the Punjab?

Gandhiji could not blame the Viceroy for what had happened. It was the act of the Congress and the League. He (the Viceroy) had openly said that he wanted a United India but he was powerless in face of Congress acceptance, however reluctantly, of the Muslim position.

There were the brave Sikhs whose leaders had been to see him. Gandhiji had explained to them what he meant by one Sikh being equal to 1¼ lakhs of persons. It was the courage of one Sikh to stand firm in spite of the opposition of 1¼ lakhs of men. This could only mean bravery of the highest and purest kind. If they had that faith and courage born of non-violence, they would be worthy of the proud name *Khalsa*. That was the lesson he had learnt from the *Granth Sahib* and *Khalsa* History.

He had done his best to get people to stand by the Cabinet Mission Statement of May 16th but had failed. But what was his duty and theirs in the face of the accepted fact? He was a servant of the Congress because he was a servant of the country and he could never be disloyal to them. Panditji and the Viceroy had said that nothing had been imposed on anyone. The agreement that was embodied in the announcement being a voluntary act of the parties could be varied by them at any stage by mutual consent. He pleaded with the Muslim League, now that they had their wish fulfilled, to relieve the Viceroy of the heavy task of being the middleman between the parties. He hoped that it was a final agreement between the parties. Therefore, all violence should stop. And Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah should invite Congress leaders for a discussion as to the best way of dealing with the further stages. Thus, for instance, there was no reason why they should not by mutual agreement define the boundaries of partitioned Punjab and Bengal.

WOULD HE FAST?

The feeling against the division of the country is strong. Gandhiji's speeches had revived the hopes that the evil might be averted. Some people asked him whether he would undertake a fast unto death in view of the decision of the Congress Working Committee accepting division of India. Had not he called Pakistan a sin in which he could never participate? Replying to this Gandhiji said that he could not fast at the dictation of anyone. Such fasts could not be lightly undertaken. They could conceivably be wholly undesirable. They could not be undertaken out of anger. Anger was a short madness. He must, therefore, undertake the fast only when the still small voice within him called for it. He was a servant of the country and, therefore, of the Congress. Was he to fast because the Congress differed from his views? He had to be patient. There were occasions enough for being impatient. The Congress seemed to stand for projects of industrialism in which he saw no deliverance for the masses from their grinding poverty. He did not believe in mill-made civilization as he did not in mill-made cloth. He did not believe in an army for the removal of the menace to the real freedom of the country. If he was to impatiently fast, in the symptoms he had described and others he could add, there were reasons enough to justify a fast unto death. He felt that he must be steadfast in the midst of the fire raging round him and prove his faith in the ultimate triumph of truth. He referred even to the document he had signed together with Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah and to which the Viceroy was really a party. He must watch what his two partners did before he acted. He could only say that he would gladly walk or drive with them to the affected parts. They (the people) might well ask what they were doing while Gurgaon was burning? He asked the audience and the authors of the rebuking messages to bear with the Congress, the League and with him, and watch, even critically, and see how things were moving. He hoped that they would not fail them, the people. The Government belonged to the latter as he did. There was ample time for the people to judge them and leave them if any of them were found wanting.

There is a large section of the Hindus who have heaved a sigh of relief that at last they are rid of the Muslims and would be able to work out and develop the country without any bickerings. But there are others who see clearly that partition is no solution to the problem. Nearly four crores of the Muslims would still remain in the Union of India and about two crores of the Hindus will remain in the so-called Pakistan areas. They feel helpless and angry at the Congress decision and as such blame the Congress and Gandhiji. A sister wrote to him that he should retire to the jungle. It was he who had spoilt Jinnah Saheb and turned his head. He (Gandhiji) was responsible for the evil that the country was facing. Gandhiji's reply was that the sister was quite wrong. Love or *ahimsa* was the most powerful magnet in the world. It never did any harm to anyone.

BRITISH BONA FIDES

Addressing the prayer gathering on the 6th instant just after his return from the Viceroy's house, Gandhiji said that they might ask him what he had brought from the Viceroy. He had brought nothing for he (the Viceroy) had nothing to give except his services if they were wanted. He had told him that his one object was to withdraw from India in the quickest manner possible, leaving behind peace and order throughout India. They had decided to go in June 1948. Now they would probably

withdraw by August 15th this year. Why had they decided to go? They were impressed by our non-violent struggle. India believed that British rule was an evil. Yet she did not try to kill the British. She simply tried to non-cooperate with the evil, not with the evil-doer. Such interval as was necessary was due to the fact that it was a voluntary withdrawal. Some arrangement was a necessity of the case.

There were several who still suspected the British *bona fides*. It was not they who were dividing India. Unity of rule they claimed as their greatest achievement. The division was the result of an agreement, however reluctant, between the Congress and the League.

Brave people were not perturbed by mere suspicions. He himself believed that the Viceroy was sincere. If he proved to be a duper, he would be the sufferer, never the duped.

PUT PAKISTAN ON THE SCREEN

Now that the Qaid-e-Azam had got what he wanted, said Gandhiji, it was up to him to give the world the shape of Pakistan and make it attractive in word and action. Was it not up to him to invite all non-Muslims and show them that they would be as happy as the Muslims of Pakistan? What about the Frontier Province? It was a Congress Province. If it was to be of Pakistan, the Qaid-e-Azam had to convince the Pathans that they would be just as well off in Pakistan as in the Union of the Provinces of India. Referendum was a dangerous method at this time. He, therefore, suggested the method of attracting the Pathan through reason and love.

What should happen was that the Union of India and Pakistan should vie with each other in well doing. If Pakistan did better, the whole of India would be Pakistan in which there would be neither majority nor minority and all would be equal. If he were the President of the Muslim League, he would put Pakistan on the screen and make it attractive by its matchless beauty. In that case he (Gandhiji) would be the first one to admit his mistake and commend Pakistan to everybody. Will the Qaid-e-Azam do this?

HAD THE CONGRESS ERRED?

Referring to the newspaper report that Gandhiji had differed from the decision of the Working Committee and that the A. I. C. C. would raise its voice against it, Gandhiji said that the A. I. C. C. had appointed the Working Committee and they could not lightly discard its decisions. Supposing the Working Committee signed a promissory note on behalf of the A. I. C. C., the A. I. C. C. had to honour it. The Working Committee might make a mistake. They could punish it by removing it. But they could not go back upon the decision already taken by it.

As for the people, he would ask them to oppose the Congress only when it tried to mislead the public deliberately. They knew his method of resistance. After all, he had preached rebellion against the mighty Sanatanist Hindu stronghold on the subject of untouchability and the result was quite good.

He might differ from the Working Committee. But having stated the fact he would recommend their decision for acceptance. He was of the opinion that they could still mend the situation to a large extent.

He had said at the Second Round Table Conference that the Congress was the representative not merely of the few lakhs of the members on the Congress rolls, but it represented all the millions of India in that it had their real welfare at heart. Thus who but the Congress could represent the Princes and the people under them? When paramountcy was at an end, surely the will of their people should be paramount.

THE VOICE OF SILENCE

Shri Girdhari Kripalani sang in the prayers *sun ri sakhi Mohan ki yeh bansri piyari* (सुनरी सखी मोहनकी यह बंसरी पियारी). Commenting on it in his post-prayer speech Gandhiji said that he was very fond of the *bhajan* both for the sweetness of the voice that had sung it and for the richness of the content. It described how Lord Krishna played the flute and the *gopis* went into exultation over it. God described as Krishna resided in everyone's heart which was likened to the silent forest. *Gopis* were the human family. The refrain of the *bhajan* was that they were to listen to the voice of the silence even in the midst of the din and the noise of the battle of life. All men and women were *gopis* before God. If they were to listen to the silence within, outward silence was of utmost necessity. If they were in tune with the Infinite, they would not move from their place even though bullets may rain over them.

TO THE FIGHTING PARTIES IN GURGAON

Turning next to the situation in Gurgaon, Gandhiji said that the *Jats*, the *Ahirs* and the *Meos* were still fighting. It was reported that they did not descend to inhuman levels and spared women and children and old people. There was arson on a large scale. They were burning huts, which to the dwellers were as precious as palaces to the princes. He appealed to the parties to cease hostilities when the Congress and the League had come to an agreement. The people must respect it and cease fighting amongst themselves. Someone had suggested that he should become the arbitrator between the fighters. He could not do so. He did not know the combatants. Nor had he ever been a self-styled arbitrator. He would have no sanction behind his award. He had not in mind the sanction of the sword. He meant the sanction of public opinion. In any event let the parties regard his appeal in the shape of an award which they should carry out.

UNITED BENGAL?

The talk of a united sovereign Bengal has been in the Press for sometime. The sponsors of the scheme, told Gandhiji that Bengal had a common culture and a common language. They did not want to split their Province in two. They were one people and would live and die as such. The valiant fight that the Bengalis put forth against Lord Curzon's scheme of partitioning Bengal was not so very long ago. Gandhiji had nothing to say against

the argument. Indeed, it applied equally to the whole of India. If any single province wanted to do the right thing, he would not oppose it.

Referring to this he said that some people had told him that the move for a united sovereign Bengal was a sinister one. The Hindus were fed up and wanted to separate West from East Bengal. The Bengal Muslim League had also rejected the unity plan but some people were still persisting with it and it was said to be due to the fact that he (Gandhiji) was behind the move. He wanted to make it clear that he could never support any questionable practice. He was even told that money was being spent like water to buy votes in favour of a united Bengal. He appreciated unity but not at the cost of honour and justice. He was taken to task for supporting Sarat Babu. He was undoubtedly his friend. He was in correspondence with him. But he would never be guilty of supporting anything that could not be publicly and honestly defended. That was his universal practice. He did not believe in questionable means even to secure a worthy end.

New Delhi 9-6-'47 S. N.

THE LAST STATE

In a parable Jesus told us of the danger of pious resolutions without a definite programme. When an unclean spirit goes out of a man and its place is not taken up by a good spirit, but the house is merely swept and garnished, then the evil spirit that has gone out will bring seven other spirits more wicked than itself and will take possession of the well-intentioned man and the last state of the man will be worse than the first.

The truth of this appears to be becoming more and more apparent in the way the Madras Government is going about its business. It cleaned up the Adviser Regime, formulated good resolutions under the Prakasam Ministry and now seems to have relapsed into slumber.

The news comes that the Firka Cottage Industrial Officers have been given the quit order. Public men of the type of R. Vinayakam Pillai who, out of their zeal for the Gandhian Economy, condescended to enter the portals of Government employment have had a rude awakening. These men are seasoned constructive workers who have to their credit much good work done in the past. We have no quarrel with the Ministry concerned as to the policies they choose to follow. That is for their constituencies to decide. If the ministers are doing things contrary to the wishes of the people, it is for the latter to take the necessary steps to pull them up or in the last resort to disown them. But what we do expect is that the Ministry will, without any prevarication, state definitely the goal they are pursuing. The reversal of the Textile Policy and the abolition of these officers indicate which way the wind is blowing; and that makes us fear that "the last state of the man will be worse than his first".

J. C. Kumarappa

AN ENGLISH WOMAN'S HUMILIATION

An English sister who loves India writes to me as follows:

"I am deeply troubled and ashamed. You will understand something of how I feel. I cannot agree with the agruments of those of my friends who, in my view, seem to miss the spiritual tragedy of dividing and sub-dividing a great people on a basis of religious differences. If divisions *must* come and sometimes they seem to be the inevitable, inescapable consequences of past policies, then let them come naturally and not by imposition from an alien hand. Then the healing forces, which Gandhiji seeks to release, can freely play their part. It is no use, no use at all trying to solve India's human problems by political jugglery, is it? Those who declared that it was unrealistic to follow *principle* and *realistic* to follow expediency, must take the responsibility for what they have done.

"Of course, India will rise to her full stature in the end. But our follies have set the clock back temporarily. The trail of sorrow and suffering distresses and humiliates me for I am convinced that whatever may have been India's own share in creating the present situation, our share is far greater. Would that our statesmen would make this confession and 'come clean'. Then we might begin to build on a basis of mutual trust and friendship."

There are many English men and women who do feel humiliated at the injury their rule has inflicted on India. Division of a country or any part of it on a religious basis can never be a cure for communal strife. Such action is the very negation of religion. If the Hindus and the Muslims have gone mad temporarily, let us hope, there is no reason whatsoever why Britain should not act sanely. Gandhiji has said more than once that their one and only duty is to withdraw their power. How we shall elect to live is our concern and we alone can settle our differences satisfactorily.

The division of India will, as the sister rightly says, be a spiritual tragedy. It will, in any event, if it comes about, be a very poor commentary on our good sense. Britain had to follow the policy of divide and rule in order to maintain her empire. Her departure should serve to unite rather than divide. The opposite course will be our everlasting humiliation.

29-5-'47 A. K.

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